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Human Trafficking, HUMAN RIGHTS

African Land Sales: *Good or Bad?*

Speaking with One Voice on *Climate Change*

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AFRICA RENEWAL

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Africa sharpens its voice on climate

Leaders forging a common position for climate change talks

By **Ernest Harsch**

When African representatives travel to Copenhagen in early December for crucial international talks on climate change, they will strive to speak in unison. "For the first time in history," says Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, "Africa will field a single negotiating team empowered to negotiate on behalf of all member states of the African Union.... Africa's interest and position will not be muffled."

At a late August meeting of African leaders that chose Mr. Meles to head the delegation, many expressed a growing sense of urgency over the mounting evidence that climate change is already affecting the lives of millions. Extreme weather, which scientists regard as a sign of climate change, has been especially dramatic in recent months, with parts of East Africa ravaged by severe drought and several nations in West Africa hit by torrential downpours and devastating floods.

"This is the time for Africa to aggressively engage" in the negotiations on climate change, Jean Ping, chairperson of the African Union Commission, told the summit. "Africa's development aspirations are at stake unless urgent steps are taken to address the problem of climate change."

According to World Bank projections released in mid-September, Africans' annual per capita consumption may decline by as much as 4–5 per cent as shifting climate disrupts local economies. By 2030 some 90 million more people in Africa will be exposed to malaria, as conditions become more favourable for the mosquitoes that carry the disease. By 2080, as much as 9–20 per cent of Africa's arable land could become much less suitable for farming.

African governments have long been aware of such trends. Many were early signers of the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which set limits on pollution emissions. But as an analysis presented to the African Union summit in August noted, Africa's previous negotiating efforts were marked by "dismal coordination" and the absence of "visible continent-wide political leadership."

Speaking at a 22 September UN General Assembly summit on climate change, Rwandan President Paul Kagame observed that one reason some African governments "more or less stood on the periphery" of the global debate was an attitude that "climate change is an industrial problem, born in the West and destined to be solved by these very nations." That standpoint must be abandoned, he argued, since climate change affects everyone, and all nations must act.

Collecting firewood in Ethiopia: Shifts in climate contribute to extreme weather, with some countries facing more drought.

According to Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, the chief executive officer of the Secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the African Union's development programme, African countries are increasingly coming together, whether at international talks on the global economic crisis or on issues of climate change. "In Copenhagen, Africa will have a single voice," he told *Africa Renewal*. "We'll have a unique coordinator for the Africa Group. We'll have a unique negotiating strategy."

Elements of Africa's position have already been presented in the lead-up to the Copenhagen meeting, which many hope will result in a new agreement for limiting greenhouse gas emissions following the expiration of the Kyoto Protocol in 2012.

A number of Africa's concerns involve "adaptation" — ways to help countries cope with threatened coastal areas, changes in rainfall and other effects of climate shifts. To adequately support such efforts, the African Union estimates that developing countries overall will need $67 bn annually by 2020.

On "mitigation" — reducing emissions of greenhouse gases — Africa expects that the industrial and industrializing countries that produce the vast bulk of such gases will agree to drastically reduce their output. African countries will themselves pledge to shift to cleaner production methods, but to do so they need new technology, more money and other help. In addition, Prime Minister Meles told a joint Africa-donor forum in Ethiopia in early September, "We want to keep our forests intact."

Although the forum was an ideal encounter for asking donors to give more, Africa's lead climate negotiator emphasized global action ahead of financing. "Our interest is not to claim compensation for climate change and its damages," Mr. Meles explained. "Our interest is to prevent that from happening." ■

Is Africa's land up for grabs?

Foreign acquisitions: some opportunities, but many see threats

By **Roy Laishley**

An apparent surge in the purchase of African land by foreign companies and governments to grow food and other crops for export has set alarm bells ringing on and off the continent. The headlines have been strident: "The Second Scramble for Africa Starts," "Quest for Food Security Breeds Neo-Colonists," "Food Security or Economic Slavery?"

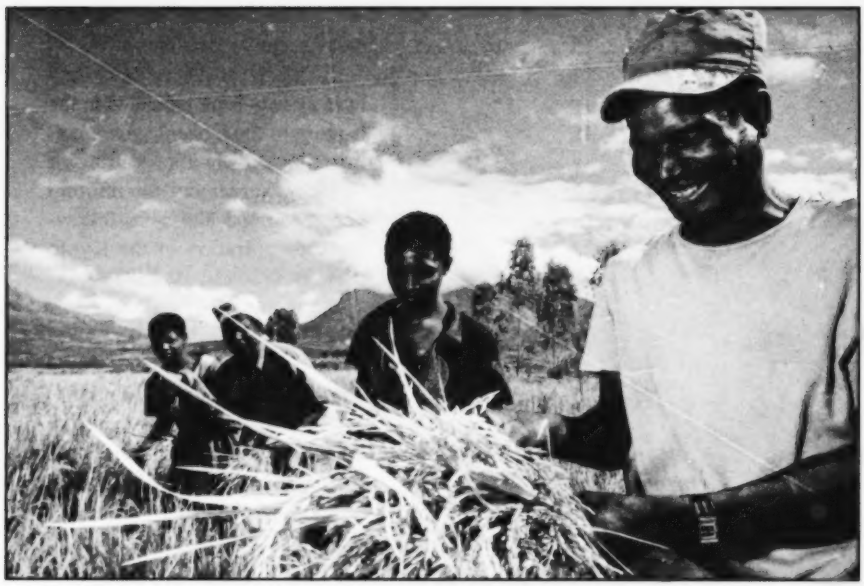

Photo: Sven Torfinn

Rice farmers in Malawi: Some experts worry that foreign-owned farming schemes may undermine land rights for local farmers and jeopardize African food security.

The outcries reflect the continuing impact of the continent's history, when as recently as the last century colonial powers and foreign settler populations arbitrarily seized African land and displaced those who lived on it, lending considerable emotion to the current volatile issue. Jacques Diouf, the Senegalese director-general of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), wonders whether such land deals could lead to a form of "neo-colonialism."

But immediate, practical concerns are also prominent. "This is a worrisome trend," Akinwumi Adesina, of the advocacy group Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), told a science forum in the Netherlands in June. Such foreign land acquisitions, he argued, have the potential to hurt domestic efforts to raise food production and could limit broad-based economic growth. Many deals have little oversight, transparency or regulation, have no environmental safeguards and fail to protect smallholder farmers from losing their customary rights to use land, Mr. Adesina said.

The sheer size of some of the land agreements has added to the alarm. A deal to allow South Korea's Daewoo Corporation to lease 1.3 mn hectares was a key factor in building support for the ouster of Madagascar's President Marc Ravalomanana in March. In Kenya the government is struggling to overcome local opposition to a proposal to give Qatar rights over some 40,000 hectares in the Tana River Valley in return for building a deep-sea port.

A number of international organizations have reacted. The FAO and the World Bank commissioned studies into so-called "land grabs." At this year's summit of the Group of Eight (G-8) industrialized countries in Italy in July, Japan pushed for a code of conduct to govern such schemes. The G-8 limited itself to a promise to work with partner countries and international organizations to develop proposals on principles and best practices for foreign investment in agricultural land.

Any code of conduct is going to be difficult to negotiate, and it will be even more difficult for industrialized countries to apply to deals that are primarily worked out between countries in the South, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Olivier De Schutter told *Africa Renewal*.

In a June report, *Large-scale Land Acquisitions and Leases*, Mr. De Schutter wrote that while such investments provide certain development opportunities, they also represent a threat to food security and other core human rights. "The stakes are huge," he told *Africa Renewal*. Unfortunately, "the deals as they have been concluded up to now are very meagre as far as the obligations of the investors are concerned." He also notes that agreements concerning thousands of hectares of farmland are sometimes just three or four pages long.

Yet for African countries agreeing to such deals, the possible advantages are also attractive. While African agriculture rarely attracts significant investments or external aid — and the current global economic downturn has made external financing even more scarce — leasing unused land to foreign governments and companies for large-scale cultivation can seem like a way to boost an underdeveloped sector and create new job opportunities.

Unprecedented scale

A recent study by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), a research group based in the UK, estimated that nearly 2.5 mn hectares of African farmland had been allocated to foreign-owned entities since

2004 in just the five countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali and Sudan) it studied in depth. The sheer scale of many leases is unprecedented, said the IIED report, *Land Grab or Development Opportunity?*, which was prepared for the FAO and the UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development.

The data on even these cases is incomplete, IIED cautioned, and do not include some of the largest deals. Chinese enterprises are reportedly negotiating to lease 2.8 mn hectares in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to grow oil palm and a further 2 mn hectares in Zambia to grow jatropha (a crop used for biofuels). Sudan has agreed to lease 690,000 hectares to South Korea to grow wheat.

A study of the media reports on recent land acquisitions put togeth[illegible] by the non-governmental organization GRAIN and other sources suggests that close to 6 mn hectares of farmland has been or is being earmarked for possible development by foreign entities. That tally does not include the Republic of Congo's proposal to a South African farmers union to lease 10 mn hectares for a variety of food crops and livestock.

Demand for food and biofuels

The surge in interest in African land has been driven by a number of factors. On the side of investors, those include a desire for food security back home and to a lesser extent rising demand for biofuels. Behind both is the expectation of rising costs of land and water as world demand for food and other crops continues to expand.

Many of the government-to-government deals are aimed at meeting food needs, especially in the states of the Arab Gulf and in South Korea. Indian companies, backed in part by their government, have invested some $1.5 bn in Ethiopia to meet rising domestic food and animal feed demand. Commercial enterprises, many of them European, as well as Chinese companies, have been in the lead in cultivating jatropha, sorghum and other biofuels in countries such as Madagascar, Mozambique and Tanzania.

Africa is a particular focus for this investment explosion because of the perception that there is plenty of cheap land and labour available, as well as a favourable climate, Mr. De Schutter points out. In Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, for example, only some 12 per cent of arable land is actually cultivated.

Africa so far has been able to mobilize only limited financing to develop its arable land. Despite persistent calls for increased domestic investment, agriculture has lagged well behind other sectors. The African Union (AU) has urged governments to devote 10 per cent of their spending to agriculture, but only four or five countries have actually met that target. Donor countries and institutions have also failed to play their part, with agriculture's share of aid tending to fall, currently at less than 5 per cent of total aid.

With land apparently in abundance, but money not, the offer by foreign investors to develop agricultural land appears very attractive. But with much of the land not as unused as it might seem and with actual returns on agricultural investment far lower than presented in initial feasibility studies, the political and economic reality for African governments can be very sobering.

"Governments are sitting on a box of dynamite," Namanga Ngoni, president of AGRA, initiated by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, told the media.

Towards a strategic approach

Recent assessments by IIED, FAO, the World Bank and the Washington-based International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) all confirm the shortcomings and potential dangers. These include the risks of undermining domestic efforts to increase food production, the danger that agricultural projects aimed exclusively at foreign markets may do little to stimulate domestic economic activities, and the potential loss of land rights for local farmers. The *Economic Report on Africa 2009*, published jointly by the AU and the UN's Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), cautions that rapid expansion of cultivated land should not be a priority, given the environmental degradation that Africa already faces.

Many of the studies also point to possible benefits for a sector strapped for cash. These include the creation of jobs, the introduction of new technologies, improvements in the quality of agricultural production and opportunities to develop higher-value agricultural processing activities. There might even be "an increase in food supplies for the domestic market and for export," the FAO says.

To realize such benefits, says an IFPRI

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Mechanized agriculture in Tanzania:
There are risks that large-scale farming may harm Africa's fragile environment.

Africa fights the 'people trade'

Scourge of human trafficking ensnares hundreds of thousands

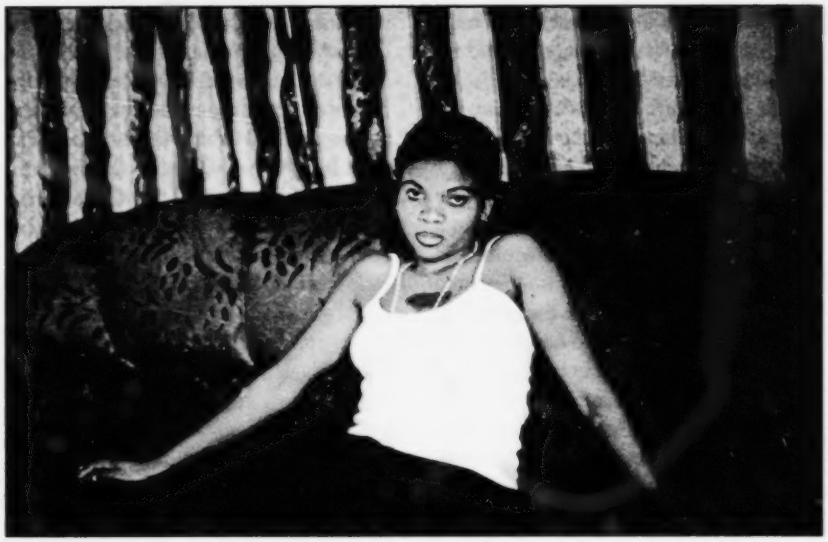
By **Michael Fleshman**

When 20-year-old Isoke Aikpitanyi was offered a job in Italy in 2000 she leapt at the chance. Life was difficult at home in Nigeria and opportunities for young women were limited and few. She knew that she would have to enter the country illegally and that the promised job would be low-paying and menial — that of a maid or nanny perhaps. But it seemed better than staying home, and the woman who made the job offer would also make the travel arrangements and pay the costs, which Ms. Aikpitanyi would repay from her earnings.

It was only after her arrival in the Italian city of Turin, she told Al-Jazeerah television in 2008, that things went terribly wrong. Shortly after her arrival, she said, she was told that "foreigners without permits can only do one job in Italy — work the streets" as a prostitute. "They told me I had to pay a debt of $20,000. The week before, they killed a girl who slept in my bedroom because she refused to pay. My resistance only lasted four weeks."

Failure to work or earn enough, she continued, was punished with violence. One beating left her in a coma for three days. Women who tried to escape were often murdered as a lesson to others. "I was a sex slave. They deceived me to come to Italy for a job that didn't exist."

Such illegal trade in people through trickery and violence is now widely known as "human trafficking" and is a problem across the globe. The only thing unusual about Ms. Aikpitanyi's ordeal was its happy ending. After months of brutality and sexual exploitation she finally broke free of her captors and started an organization for trafficking victims in Italy, the Association of Benin City Girls, to help more women escape. So far, she noted, more than 300 women have sought the association's help.



A young girl from Benin City in Nigeria's southern Edo State, where the vast majority of Nigerian women trafficked to Europe for prostitution originate.

No escape for many

Countless others, mostly women and children, notes the United Nations, are not so lucky. Driven by poverty, conflict, discrimination and injustice, says the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), hundreds of thousands of people in developing countries fall prey to sophisticated trafficking gangs every year — living and too often dying in harsh conditions on the shadowy margins of societies far from home. Fearful of the authorities and forced to work as prostitutes and labourers under threat of violence, many find no escape.

In response to stories like that of Ms. Aikpitanyi, African governments are stepping up efforts to combat trafficking. Public education and awareness campaigns have been launched, police and border control agents are being trained to detect and prevent trafficking, and cross-border and international cooperation has been strengthened.

But a lack of human and financial resources for anti-trafficking activities, combined with weak laws, porous borders and a seemingly endless supply of people desperate to escape grinding poverty at home, have hamstrung efforts by African and other developing countries to prevent their citizens from falling into the hands of the trafficking gangs.

Countries that are the destinations for the traffickers' human merchandise also need to do more. Until the demand for cheap, coerced labour is reduced and governments treat trafficked persons as victims of crime instead of lawbreakers themselves, experts say, traffickers will always find ways to supply the market.

'Huge problem' in Africa

The precise number of people lured into trafficking is unknown. Between the smugglers' efforts to avoid detection and the low priority given by most governments to monitoring and preventing trafficking, estimates vary widely, notes the UN human rights commissioner's special rapporteur on human trafficking, Joy Ezeilo. She puts the total number of people trafficked globally last year at about 2.5 million, including more than 1 million children. It is also big business, earning the gangs upwards of $10 bn a year, reports UNICEF.

"What I can say," Ms. Ezeilo told *Africa Renewal* in an interview from her offices in Lagos, "is that human trafficking in

Africa is a huge problem. Africa itself has become a major source of trafficked people around the world, both within and outside Africa." The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that in Italy alone between 10,000 and 15,000 Nigerian women have been trafficked into the commercial sex industry.

In contrast to the international trade, where 80 per cent of the victims are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, Ms. Ezeilo explained, "in Africa we have trafficking of people into domestic work, farm labour and construction, in addition to sexual exploitation. We have focused a lot on trafficking for sexual exploitation outside Africa, but these other forms are there within Africa's borders and they are there on a very large scale."

Complex factors

A detailed 2009 report by the UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) bears her out. The UNODC study, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*,* found that trafficking Africans overseas is most often a brutally straightforward enterprise, with the great majority of victims young women destined for Europe and the US where they are forced into prostitution. Trafficking within Africa, however, is far more complex and fueled by a wide range of factors determining who is targeted by the traffickers and what they are forced to do when they arrive at their destinations. Those factors include local economic conditions, seasonal demands for labour, and military conflicts and environmental degradation that disrupt livelihoods. Cultural practices and gender and ethnic discrimination that reduce economic and social opportunities for women, children and minorities also contribute and make abuses of their rights more acceptable to society.

In Mali, the government reported that 119 children (81 boys and 38 girls) were known to have been trafficking victims in 2006. Nearly two-thirds were sent to locations inside the country. Most of those taken outside Mali were discovered in surrounding countries. In 2005, notes a report of the special rapporteur, Malawian authorities arrested a trafficker trying to smuggle 15 children, including a 10-year-old, into Zambia for use in seasonal farm labour.

In southwest Nigeria, as many as a thousand children from neighbouring Benin were found to be employed as forced labour in the region's gravel quarries, despite efforts by the two governments to halt the practice. According to a 2007 report to the UN Human Rights Council by the non-governmental Coalition Against Trafficking in Women and Children, the victims, some as young as six, were forced to dig and transport stones eight to 10 hours a day, sometimes seven days a week, without pay and without adequate food or accommodation, for as long as six years. Traffickers working for the mine owners instead paid victims' parents small sums over that period. On at least one occasion, the study asserts, mine owners forced hundreds of children into the surrounding countryside to avoid discovery by government inspectors.

In 2006 the Mauritanian government reported to UNODC that 22 Mauritanian children had been trafficked to several Middle Eastern countries and forced to work as jockeys in the camel racing industry. According to media accounts, the children were selected for their small size, forced to live in barbed wire compounds and deliberately underfed to prevent weight gain. The children were often beaten and sexually abused, and sometimes suffered serious injuries in racing accidents.

Exploiting poverty, tradition

The scope and diversity of the human trafficking problem in Africa, combined with the region's open borders and weak law enforcement institutions, make it particularly difficult to stop, notes Ms. Ezeilo, the special rapporteur. Globally, she says, it is usually possible to classify states according to their use as source, destination or transit countries. Such categories are intended to help governments better target their anti-trafficking programmes and law enforcement resources.

"Our problem in Africa is that most countries are all three, including my country, Nigeria," Ms. Ezeilo explains. Sometimes countries become destination countries by accident because people en route to Europe get stranded in North Africa and are pressed into prostitution or forced labour there. "It can be very hard for governments to know what to tackle and where to focus their attention."

Traffickers can also take advantage of traditional apprenticeships and other cul-

*Available on the UNODC website at: <www.unodc.org/documents/Global_Report_on_TIP.pdf>.

UN protocol against human trafficking

Following the outlawing of the international slave trade in the 19th century, early efforts to prevent human trafficking included the 1904 International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic, as the transport of women for forced prostitution was then called. In December 2003, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, came into force, part of the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. The protocol now has 117 government signatories, including 41 in Africa.

The protocol is intended to close gaps and loopholes in existing international and national legislation and offer greater protection to trafficking victims. It defines trafficking as the "recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt" of people through the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, through abduction, fraud, deception or the abuse of power, or through using payments or other benefits to induce vulnerable people to consent to being trafficked "for the purpose of exploitation."

In addition to combating trafficking, the protocol is intended to protect and assist victims, "with full respect for their human rights," and promotes international cooperation against trafficking. It urges signatory governments to adopt comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation, to provide aid, counselling and repatriation assistance to victims, to step up training programmes for law enforcement and immigration officers and to improve information exchange and cross-border cooperation to prevent trafficking.

tural practices to lure people into bondage. In Senegal, studies by the UN, IOM and US government have found, the centuries-old practice of sending children to study at religious schools, called *daaras*, has become corrupted. *Daaras* were originally located in rural areas and provided religious instruction and accommodation to boys as young as four or five from nearby communities in exchange for farm labour. The schools often provided the only education available to poor families.

Peter Arnold Inc. / Charlotte Thege

A boy harvesting tea leaves in Kenya: Much of the human trafficking within Africa involves children taken to neighbouring countries for domestic or farm labour.

In the 1970s and 1980s, however, drought and economic hardship forced many of the *daaras* to move to the largest city, Dakar, breaking contact between children and their parents and opening the practice to abuse. In many cases, researchers found, the *marabouts* (teachers) offer little religious instruction and instead force their students to beg on the streets for long hours, under threat of beatings. The Senegalese government and the UN have responded with programmes to improve conditions in the schools and educate parents about the dangers, but progress has been slow.

Traffickers have also exploited another common practice in Nigeria, Senegal, Togo and other countries: placing poor girls in the homes of wealthier families to work as domestics in exchange for accommodation and education. Many never see the inside of a school.

"Most families don't know" how their children are treated, notes Ms. Ezeilo. Trafficking victims are often approached with bogus job offers by people in their communities who win the trust of victims and their parents.

Victimizing the vulnerable

For all the complexity and variation of Africa's human trafficking problems, observes Ms. Ezeilo, there are some common threads. "People who find themselves trafficked are all in vulnerable circumstances. Among women, gender inequalities are a major 'push' factor. Lack of education and employment force women into trafficking situations. Others are running away from forced marriages and abusive husbands."

Because of very high youth unemployment, young people are more vulnerable than adults, she says. "Look at Africa. You have poverty, wars and political crises, bad governance, discrimination against women, inequality, a lack of education and illiteracy. These make people vulnerable and the traffickers exploit them."

Traffickers also share some common traits, she explains. "They are mostly criminal gangs. People who know how to smuggle guns and drugs also know ways to smuggle people. They are sophisticated at information technology. The Internet is becoming a tool for the traffickers. They post these jobs. They exploit people who are looking for work. You can find yourself being trafficked just like that."

Coercion and violence are common as well. "I have seen cases where people are made to swear an oath in front of their families that they know they are traveling illegally and will comply with traffickers' conditions to pay back the cost of transportation." Some women from West Africa trafficked to Western Europe, she noted, are told after they arrive that the cost of transporting them is $500,000. "They will have to work the rest of their lives to pay!"

Despite the brutality, Ms. Ezeilo says, victims are often more afraid of the police than the gangs, and rarely seek protection. Trafficked people are often viewed by the governments of destination countries as illegal immigrants and deported, rather than being aided as victims of crime. The traffickers exploit this, and tell their victims: "You can go to the authorities, but then you are in trouble. You will be repatriated and punished."

Ms. Ezeilo urges destination countries to treat victims of human trafficking separately from "willing immigrants" and to place human rights at the centre of their actions. "Then people would be willing to talk about this. Otherwise it is clandestine. You will never know about it and you will never be able to stop it."

Although many trafficked people, like Isoke Aikpitanyi, begin their journeys as illegal migrants, international law requires governments to recognize the trafficked as crime victims once it has been shown that they have been subjected to violence and coercion. In addition to the protection of their basic human rights, trafficking victims are, within the laws and means of destination countries, entitled to information about legal and administrative proceedings against them, to participation in prosecutions against their traffickers, to physical safety and well-being, and to the opportunity to seek financial compensation for damages.

In addition, host governments are required to "consider" providing medical and psychological assistance to trafficking victims, education for trafficked children prior to repatriation, housing and legal counseling, and, in "appropriate" cases, temporary or permanent residency.

Confronting trafficking

The good news, says Ms. Ezeilo, is that since the UN's Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (see box, page 7) came into force in late 2003, many countries have expanded efforts to end the trade. A 2006 survey of 155 countries by the UNODC found that those with some form of anti-trafficking legislation increased from 33 per cent in 2003 to more than 80 per cent in 2008. More than half of those countries, including some in Africa, have created special anti-trafficking police forces to enforce the new laws.

In Burkina Faso, parliament passed a law in 2003 criminalizing the trafficking of anyone under 18 and created a separate police unit to enforce it. Convictions for trafficking more than doubled between 2004 and 2006, although the numbers remain low. A law criminalizing adult trafficking is now pending. Ethiopia adopted anti-trafficking legislation and a national action plan in 2004. The government investigated 37 cases of trafficking in 2007 and won 18 convictions — eight of which resulted in prison sentences of 10 years or more.

Ms. Ezeilo singles out Ghana and Nigeria for their efforts to fight trafficking. Both countries have passed anti-trafficking laws and established specialized police units, she says, and aggressively investigate and prosecute cases. In Nigeria, UNODC reports, the National Agency for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons coordinates anti-trafficking units in both the national police and the immigration department. Convictions increased from eight in 2007 to 24 in 2008. The government also provides medical and psychological services and temporary visas, work permits and financial aid to victims. "It shows what political will can do," Ms. Ezeilo asserts. "Governments that are determined to crack down on trafficking can be successful."

Regional programmes are also being set up. The Economic Community of West African States has adopted an initiative to promote uniform anti-trafficking legislation and improve cross-border cooperation. In Southern Africa, where anti-trafficking legislation and enforcement are particularly weak, the IOM and a research group, the Southern African Migration Project, convened in 2008 the first of a series of regional meetings to raise governmental awareness of trafficking.

On 16 June the African Union marked the 2009 Day of the African Child with the launch of a pan-African campaign, the Africa Union Commission Initiative Against Trafficking. Its purpose is to raise awareness among governments and promote implementation of an action plan, adopted in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in 2006, that calls for criminalizing trafficking, developing national anti-trafficking strategies and strengthening the ability of police and courts to detect and prosecute traffickers.

Corbis/ Alfredo Caliz

A woman from Côte d'Ivoire working in Rabat, Morocco. Sometimes people from sub-Saharan Africa en route to Europe get stranded in North Africa and are pressed into prostitution or forced labour there.

Grassroots action

Civil society groups and religious leaders also have a key role to play, Ms. Ezeilo notes. "Community initiatives are the best intervention. They are there in the village. They know the problems people face. Local organizations can mobilize the leaders, educate the religious figures and traditional leaders, and counsel the person and the families about what can happen."

In Swaziland, civil society activists identify high-risk individuals and families. They offer counseling to potential victims and try to address the problems pushing them into the arms of traffickers. In extreme cases, one Swazi activist told *Africa Renewal* in Addis Ababa in late 2008, children and young adults are removed from their families and sheltered in the capital city, Mbabane, to prevent abuses.

Internationally, religious orders and global women's organizations have created informal networks to rescue trafficked people, protect them from retaliation or arrest and arrange transportation and counseling back home.

Curbing the demand

Wealthier countries that attract traffickers can also do more, Ms. Ezeilo concludes. They should continue to help African and Asian countries solve the economic and social problems that drive people to traffickers, while at the same time acting to curb demand at home. "We can never hope to stop the supply of trafficked people from poor countries until we also tackle the demand for those people in the

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Security for the highest bidder

Shoddy policing for the many, costly private protection for the few

By **Mary Kimani**

Outside an imposing residence in Runda, an upscale residential area in Nairobi, Kenya, two men in black-and-orange uniforms stand guard. They work for Group 4 Security, a private security firm. A few feet away a patrol car idles. Its radio communication systems are patched into an alarm centre in the city and to an identical car parked near a police station two miles away. The patrol cars are there to ensure the police respond as soon as an alarm is raised.

Fifteen miles away in the lower-income area of Jericho, there are no uniformed security guards or patrol cars. Police response is slow or absent and crimes such as armed robbery are common. So too is vigilante violence against suspected criminals.

Such contrasts are not limited to Nairobi. The dual reality — little public police protection for the majority of citizens and much better costly security for the wealthy few — is common all over Africa.

Ensuring the security of people and their property is one of the most fundamental responsibilities of a well-functioning state. It is traditionally the job of the national police forces. However, Africa's police are woefully understaffed. The United Nations recommends one police officer for every 450 citizens. Kenya has one for every 1,150, Tanzania one for every 1,298, and Ghana one for every 1,200.

Most police forces are also underfunded and poorly equipped. Officers are often short on vehicles and fuel, making them routinely late or unable to respond to crimes. Inadequate funds also translate into poor pay, low morale and rampant corruption, all of which hamper the ability to provide adequate public security.

Increasingly, private security companies are plugging the gap. Given the state of Africa's official police forces, the growth of private firms appears to be a timely and viable solution. But regional experts urge caution. They point out that poor regulation of such companies can worsen corruption and encourage the diversion of public police vehicles and skills to the protection of those who can pay. Governments need to strengthen their capacity to provide better public security for everyone, the experts argue.

Private guards in Uganda: Only those who can afford to pay have access to such security services.

Weak, feared and corrupt

In a July 2008 report on private and public security in Uganda, Solomon Kirunda, a researcher for the South African–based Institute of Security Studies (ISS), notes that "a functioning police force of any nation state is expected to be principally involved with maintaining security [and the] prevention and detection of crime." To do that, police forces need resources and political impartiality.

Historically African police units were tools of colonial repression, Adedeji Ebo, who oversees the security sector reform team in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, told *Africa Renewal*. Only a few countries have successfully transformed their police into service institutions. "That is a fundamental deficit about policing in Africa," Mr. Ebo observes. "Rather than being associated with safety, the uniform is often seen as a source of fear and oppression, abuse and extortion."

Weak public administration is another problem, Mr. Ebo adds. In the two decades between the 1980s and early 2000s fiscal austerity measures forced many governments to reduce their spending on law enforcement. Reduced spending coincided with declining economic prosperity and with migration to the cities, where urban poverty and overcrowding made for more crime.

Although economic performance subsequently improved, police officers in Africa have remained badly paid. Poor conditions of service mean that the police generally cannot attract quality recruits. Professionalism is largely absent and extortion and corruption thrive as officers seek to augment meagre wages.

In 2009 Kenya's police force topped the list of the most corrupt East African institutions compiled by the local chapter of Transparency International, a global anti-corruption advocacy group headquartered in Berlin. The Tanzanian police came in second. In fact, since Transparency International Kenya began conducting

surveys on the issue in 2001, the Kenyan police force has consistently headed its list of the country's "most corrupt" institutions. According to another Kenyan anti-corruption organization, the Mars Group, the recruitment, deployment and promotion of Kenyan police are often subject to political and other forms of patronage rather than being based on merit.

Not just numbers

Not all African countries struggle to provide enough police. Nigeria has more than 370,000 police officers and a police-to-citizen ratio of 1 to 400, which more than meets the UN's recommended figure. Paradoxically, say Rita Abrahamsen and Michael Williams, researchers at the University of Wales, Nigerian society "is over-policed and under-secured."

Ms. Abrahamsen and Mr. Williams noted in a 2005 report that although there are "many police officers" prominently stationed in the "crime-prone streets of Lagos" and the insurgency-affected Niger Delta, the officers are "often unable to enforce law and order." Nigeria's problem, they noted, is not a lack of officers. More often than not the police are themselves a significant source of insecurity, since they are "often engaged in criminal activities — particularly corruption and extortion." Nigeria's police are also feared for their excessive use of force.

According to Mr. Ebo, extensive reform is needed to address the shortcomings of African police forces and to achieve professionalism, enhance capacity and improve effectiveness. "Strong oversight of police institutions is necessary," he says. "But most important is for people to feel that they have a part to play in that oversight and that the police is an institution over which they have control."

Similarly, ISS researchers argue for a review of the laws governing police actions and for reforms in recruitment, promotion and accountability procedures. Police forces also need to be politically independent and well funded.

Although governments routinely assist each other with such reforms, the UN can only provide assistance at the request of the government of the country or if the Security Council or General Assembly determines that international assistance is required, usually when a country needs to rebuild after conflict. Police reform is increasingly accepted as an important priority in post-conflict countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo(DRC). However, in countries not experiencing conflict, governments are often reluctant to invite international organizations to look into what they regard as sensitive internal security matters.

Turning to the private sector

As the gap between the population's need for security and the ability of state institutions to provide it has grown, wealthier citizens have turned to the private sector. As a result, the number of private security companies has mushroomed. In Nigeria some 1,500 to 2,000 security firms employ about 100,000 people. Kenya has about 2,000 companies. One, the KK Guards, operates not just in Kenya but also in Tanzania, Uganda, southern Sudan, Rwanda and the eastern DRC. Security officers in private firms are often much better equipped than the national police, with vehicles, radio alarm systems and rapid-response capacity.

Ironically, except in a few countries like South Africa, Uganda and Angola, private security officers are not allowed to bear arms. So when a private security firm wants police at its clients' homes or offices, the firms have to call in a public response.

Researchers have found that security firms in the DRC, Kenya and other countries informally "hire" police officers to accompany their patrol vehicles. At first glance such cooperation may appear to help both the police and security firms bridge the gaps in capacity. However, as researchers have pointed out, such partnerships can actually reduce public security, given the weaknesses in Africa's police institutions.

'Privatization of public policing'

In an ISS study on private security in the DRC, researcher Mieke Goede found that with the advent of private security firms, the Congolese police, rather than working on internal reform to strengthen their ability to provide services, had increasingly "sought to enter the commercial security market." In 2003 an agreement between the police and private security companies allowed the firms to incorporate armed police into their teams to conduct hybrid patrols and guard operations and to respond jointly to alarms.

Photo: Jan Banning

Office of a police commander in Maputo, Mozambique: Many public police forces in Africa have few vehicles and little equipment to help protect citizens, and when they do, they are often feared because of their brutality or corruption.

see page 20

Pursuit of justice or Western plot?

International indictments stir angry debate in Africa

By **Mary Kimani**

In July 2008 Luis Moreno-Ocampo, the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), announced his intention to prosecute President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan for human rights violations related to the conflict in that country's Darfur region. Less than a year later, on 3 March 2009, ICC judges confirmed that an arrest warrant had been issued for President Bashir on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes.

That indictment, among other actions by the ICC, has provoked intense controversy, adding further heat to an often angry debate about the court's role in Africa. Critics argue that the ICC is placing undue emphasis on Africa and that indicting the sitting Sudanese president threatens that country's fragile peace process. Supporters of the ICC's actions worry that such arguments diminish the seriousness of the crimes and point out that some of the most powerful critics are other African leaders who fear they might one day face similar charges.

When 120 states first signed the Rome Statute establishing the court in July 1998, many saw its creation as a major diplomatic breakthrough. That support reflected broad agreement with the affirmation of the ICC Statute that people who "bear the greatest responsibility for the worst crimes known to humanity" should be punished. By 2002, 60 countries had ratified the treaty — the minimum required for it to become law — a number that has grown to 110 today.

The new court has also met widespread support in Africa. Today 30 of the continent's 54 countries have ratified, forming the largest regional bloc among the countries that are party to the court. Many Africans work at the court, including as judges.

Chidi Anselm Odinkalu, head of the Africa justice programme of the non-governmental Open Society Institute, explains why many Africans initially embraced the ICC. "Most people in our continent are, like me, children of war, want and deprivation, caused mostly by bad government," he noted in an article posted online by the African publisher Pambazuka. "For us, justice for mass atrocities is intimately personal." Unfortunately, in most African countries, Mr. Odinkalu points out, dignity, peace and justice have proved illusory. "This is why most of us supported the establishment of the ICC. We believed the court would help to end high-level impunity for mass atrocities, enabling us to attain the best we are capable of."

Alamy / Peter Marshall

Focus on Africa

The ICC prosecutor has the power to investigate or prosecute cases referred by national governments or by the Security Council. The court received its first case in 2003, referred by the government of Uganda, and subsequently issued five indictments against leaders of the notorious Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), who remain at large. It has also arrested several Congolese rebel leaders — and a former vice president — for crimes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) or in the neighbouring Central African Republic. In Sudan, warrants have been issued not only for President Bashir, but also for the country's interior minister, the leader of a pro-government militia and a leader of the rebel United Resistance Front (who has voluntarily surrendered to the court). The court's prosecutor has also investigated in Côte d'Ivoire and been asked to look at allegations of ethnic cleansing in Kenya.

None of the indictments has provoked as much debate as the warrant for the Sudanese president. The African Union (AU), at a February 2009 summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, expressed concern over the prosecutor's intention to seek the warrant. The AU

then asked the Security Council (which referred the case) to defer proceedings against the Sudan leader, arguing that a legal process would undermine ongoing regional peace efforts in which Mr. Bashir was an active participant. "The search for justice should be pursued in a way that does not impede or jeopardize efforts aimed at promoting lasting peace," AU leaders stated. They also reiterated their concern about a possible "misuse of indictments against African leaders."

After the Security Council declined to defer the case, the AU Peace and Security Council on 14 July 2009 announced a decision by the AU Assembly not to cooperate with the ICC warrant. The African leaders said they were unhappy with the "manner in which the prosecution against President Bashir has been conducted, the publicity-seeking approach of the ICC prosecutor" and the Security Council's refusal to defer the indictment against President Bashir.

Reuters/ Mohamed Nureldin Abdallah

For and against: *Sudanese demonstrators in the United Kingdom (facing page) demand that those accused of mass atrocities in Darfur be tried by the International Criminal Court while other Sudanese (above) protest in Khartoum against the court's indictment of President Omar a-Bashir.*

Anger and alarm

Some African leaders expressed sharper anger. The ICC "has been put in place only for African countries, only for poor countries," Rwandan President Paul Kagame told reporters. "Every year that passes, I am proved right.... Rwanda cannot be part of colonialism, slavery and imperialism." Jean Ping, the president of the AU Commission, told the French radio network RFI that the "ICC always targets ... Africans. Does it mean that you have nothing on Gaza? Does it mean you have nothing [on the] Caucasus? Does it mean that you have nothing on the militants in Colombia? There is nothing on Iraq? We are raising this type of question because we don't want a double standard."

Responding to charges that the court is "targeting" Africa, Sylvia Steiner, an ICC judge from Brazil, notes that three of the four cases currently before the court were referred by African governments. The Security Council's decision to refer the case of Darfur, she adds, followed an investigation by a UN commission. The ICC prosecutor's office then investigated further before asking the court to issue the warrants. In making their decision, says Ms. Steiner, the "sole material" to which the three judges in the case had access was from that investigation.

However, Richard Goldstone, a former prosecutor of the tribunals for Rwanda and Yugoslavia, acknowledges perceptions that the indictments are skewed. In an article published by the International Bar Association, Mr. Goldstone said that the ICC does appear "too focused on prosecuting crimes committed on the continent of Africa, while paying scant regard to similar situations elsewhere in the world." He observed that although the prosecutor's office said it had looked at other cases in Afghanistan, Georgia, Palestine and Colombia, no warrants were issued for suspects outside Africa.

Mr. Goldstone noted that this is something that the ICC should be able to fix quickly and easily. "The ICC has a responsibility to ensure that there is balance in the investigation and prosecution of cases," he said. To dispel notions that the ICC is Africa-specific or Western-driven, the ICC prosecutor "needs to commence investigations ... in other parts of the world." Where "appropriate and where there is sufficient evidence," such investigations should "lead to timely prosecutions," Mr. Goldstone said.

Human rights lawyers Olympia Bekou and Sangeeta Shah, who have written extensively on the court, counter that there would be less need for the ICC to engage in Africa if the continent's governments did a better job of bringing to justice those responsible for mass atrocities. For critics worried that the international community is intervening too much in domestic affairs, they answer that the best solution would be to strengthen domestic prosecutions so that the ICC does not have to intervene. That "should be the ultimate goal of every state."

Weak national courts

Solomon Dersso, a senior researcher with the South African–based Institute of Security Studies (ISS), argues that the ICC's concentration on African cases is the result of two realities com-

ing together. First, Africa's weak national judicial systems make it difficult to prosecute powerful people. Second, all states are part of an international system in which weak nations do not have much influence.

While the ICC was intended to be a court of last resort — to be used only after national systems proved unwilling or unable to prosecute gross violations — this has not worked well in Africa, "where the capacity to try such crimes is needed most," says Mr. Dersso. This contrasts with countries like Argentina and Chile that have successfully prosecuted leaders accused of similar crimes. One factor in that regional discrepancy, Mr. Dersso argues, is that while donor countries have invested millions of dollars in building ad hoc tribunals and international courts, they have not given much support to Africa's national judicial systems.

Consequently, in Africa, "there seems to be more resort to the international system," Mr. Dersso says. This reliance makes the ICC appear to be overly active in Africa. Such dependence, Mr. Dersso maintains, also denies Africa's national systems an opportunity to develop their own capacities to try crimes, in turn making it harder for a culture of human rights and respect for the rule of law to take root nationally, "where these commodities matter most."

Power imbalances

The inherent power imbalances in the international political system contribute to Africa's sense of being targeted, Mr. Dersso notes. Specifically, he cites Article 13 of the ICC Statute, which gives the Security Council the power to refer cases to the ICC or to defer the court's proceedings, even for countries that have not signed on to the ICC, as in the case of Sudan.

According to celebrated Columbia University professor Mahmood Mamdani, from Uganda, "Giving the Security Council power to refer cases from a non-signatory country to the ICC was against the Law of Treaties, under which no country can be bound by the provisions of a treaty it has not signed."

Compounding the problem is that three of the Security Council's veto-wielding permanent members, China, Russia and the US, have not ratified the Rome Statute creating the ICC. Many believe those countries would never allow the Security Council to refer any cases related to their nationals. "Granting powers to the Security Council to refer cases to the ICC, or to block them, was unacceptable, especially if [Council] members were not all signatories to the treaty," as this "provided escape routes for those accused of serious crimes but with clout in the UN body," Mr. Mamdani points out.

Mr. Dersso agrees, noting that "unlike weak African states without such privilege, powerful states are in a better position to shield their leaders from the arm of justice." This ability to protect their nationals from prosecution has lent "credence to the claim [that] the ICC system [engages in] selective justice, or that it is biased or discriminatory against the weak in the international system."

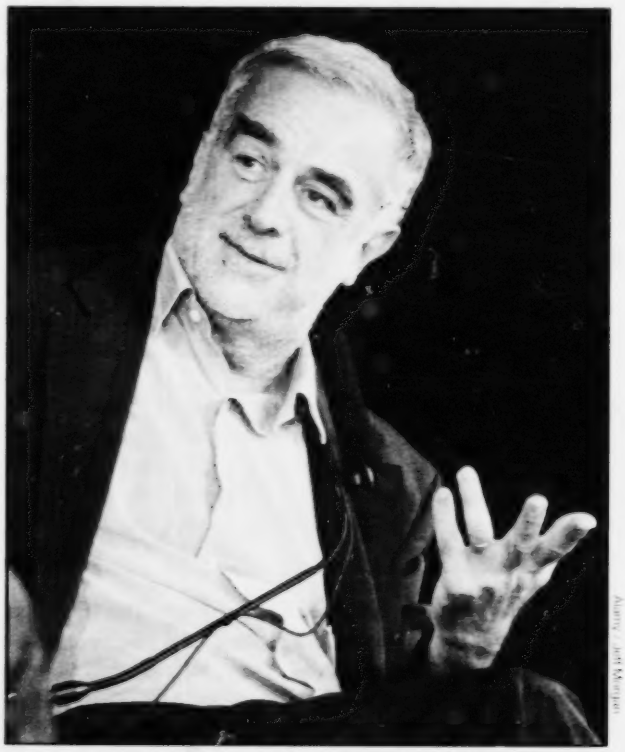
Fighting impunity

Mr. Goldstone, the former international tribunal prosecutor, notes that such political considerations apply not only at the international level, but also nationally. Cases referred to the ICC by African leaders have so far been "disproportionately focused on rebel leaders," he says, a fact that has led to the referrals "being seen as political tools in the hands of leaders who wished to remove their opponents."

Mr. Goldstone notes the discrepancy between African leaders' silence when the ICC chose to prosecute "erstwhile rebel leaders and political opponents of national governments," and their stringent protests against proceedings directed at a fellow president. "The ICC is not a court of convenience, to be supported only when it is politically expedient," Mr. Goldstone argues.

For the many victims of atrocities in Africa, such political considerations are beside the point, notes Kofi Annan, a former UN Secretary-General and now a member of the Africa Progress Panel, a group that advocates for the continent's development. In an op-ed article published in various newspapers in June, he noted that some African leaders see the ICC actions as "an imposition, if not a plot, by the industrialized West." In his view, their outcry "demeans the yearning for human dignity that resides in every African heart." He noted that the world has little hope of preventing atrocities or "reassuring those who live in fear of their recurrence, if African leaders stop supporting justice for the most heinous crimes just because one of their own stands accused."

Mr. Annan, who in 2008 mediated a peace agreement following post-election violence in Kenya, continued: "The African opponents of the international court argue that it is fixated on



ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo: Some hail his efforts to combat impunity in Africa, others accuse him of unfairly targeting the continent.

Africa because its four cases so far all concern alleged crimes against African victims. One must begin by asking why African leaders shouldn't celebrate this focus on African victims. Do these leaders really want to side with the alleged perpetrators of mass atrocities rather than their victims? Is the court's failure to date to answer the calls of victims outside of Africa really a reason to leave the calls of African victims unheeded?"

Not all African governments aligned themselves with the AU's position on Mr. Bashir's indictment. Botswana's Foreign Affairs Ministry noted that the ICC was set up specifically to deal with human rights violations committed by powerful people, those most likely to otherwise go unpunished. "The people of Africa and Sudan in particular have been victims of these crimes. Botswana strongly holds the view that the people of Africa, including the people of Sudan, deserve to be protected from the perpetrators of such crimes," the ministry stated.

Joseph Ott, one of the indicted leaders of Uganda's notorious Lord's Resistance Army. Will the ICC warrants impede talks to end the fighting in northern Uganda?

After the AU announced that it would not cooperate with the ICC, more than 130 civil society groups from 30 African countries called on their governments to rethink their position. "We urge our governments to reaffirm their commitment to fighting impunity by supporting and cooperating with the ICC," said Oby Nwankwo of Nigeria's Civil Resource Development and Documentation Centre. Comfort Ero of the International Centre for Transitional Justice in South Africa said that civil society groups across Africa are united in their "determination not to allow leaders to forfeit Africa's commitment to justice for victims of atrocities."

Nor does the broader public in Africa share their leaders' worries. According to World Public Opinion, an international polling agency, 77 per cent of Kenyans polled approved of the ICC indictment against the Sudanese president, as did 71 per cent of Nigerians, while 52 per cent of Egyptians disapproved.

Peace versus justice?

Some critics argue that ongoing peace processes must take precedence over concerns for justice. From that perspective, they maintain that the ICC warrants may worsen the humanitarian crises in countries under investigation.

The warrants for Joseph Kony and other leaders of the LRA were seen as impeding a peaceful end to the conflict in northern Uganda. However, even after offers of amnesty to all rebels not named in the ICC indictment and of local instead of international trials for the leaders, LRA rebels continued to attack villages and abduct children in Uganda, Sudan and the DRC. The warrant against the Sudanese president was also said to risk impeding the Sudanese peace process.

Mabvuto Hara, president of the Southern African Development Community Lawyers Association, responds that the "peace before justice" argument serves to perpetuate impunity. "When our leaders are under pressure or when there is a change in government, they come to the negotiation table blackmailing their counterparts and asking for amnesty.... What they are actually saying is: 'Let's have no accountability for criminal acts'."

Mr. Annan urged the African Union to "not abandon its promise to fight impunity. Unless indicted war criminals are held to account, regardless of their rank, others tempted to emulate them will not be deterred, and African people will suffer."

Mr. Odinkalu of the Open Society Institute fears that the debate is becoming counterproductive. "Criticism of the court, no matter how constructive, risks being denounced as endorsing impunity," he notes, while "support for it, no matter how reasonable, is easily branded imperialism." In the meantime, "the deadly business of mass atrocities continues unchecked, its victims in Africa fret and the credibility of the ICC suffers."

Others worry that the current controversy may overshadow important legal innovations by the court. The trial of Thomas Lubanga, a Congolese militia leader, is the first international case to prosecute the use of child soldiers as a war crime. There have also been important precedents for the rights of victims. Unlike trials before the international tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, trials at the ICC allow victims the right to be represented by an attorney and to apply for reparations to be paid through an international victims' trust fund.

Rather than opposing the court's warrants, argues Mr. Odinkalu, the AU could better address its unease by ensuring closer coordination among African governments, the ICC and the UN to make sure the court works better and addresses Africa's concerns. More importantly, he argues, "the African Union must translate its rhetoric against impunity into a programme of action, showing that African lives matter and that it will not issue a free pass to those — big or small — who violate Africans." ■

Africa looks beyond 'war on terror'

For long-term solutions rooted in development, human rights

By **Ernest Harsch**

The government of Mali declared in early June that it would mount a "merciless struggle" against terrorist forces operating in the country's far northern desert. President Amadou Toumani Touré vowed that the killers of a British hostage, murdered just a few days earlier, would not escape unpunished. Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), a predominantly Algerian dissident group that had claimed credit for the execution, reacted a few days later by assassinating a colonel in the Malian intelligence service. Then within less than a week the Malian army launched its first major operations against AQIM bases near the northern border with Algeria, reportedly killing up to two dozen fighters. In subsequent clashes Mali lost some of its own troops.

By directly engaging with AQIM, the Malian authorities demonstrated their willingness to respond to armed challenges with force. Yet Mali's overall approach to conflict goes well beyond military reactions. Since the 1990s, Tuareg and other ethnic rebels have been active in Mali's arid Sahel region. By considering their political and economic grievances, the government has succeeded in persuading many fighters to lay down their weapons.

The establishment of a democratic system in 1992 has facilitated political dialogue, and provides citizens with ways to peacefully air their concerns. Mali has a vibrant civil society and free press as well as a record of respecting human rights. Although the government has few financial resources, it has devoted much attention to trying to improve conditions for its poorest citizens.

Across Africa, other countries face similar challenges as they try to address immediate security threats while simultaneously pursuing long-range priorities. But because the continent confronts so many pressing problems, tackling terrorism has so far not taken a high profile, despite the calls to wage "war on terror" that have been so prominent internationally since the 11 September 2001 attacks in New York and Washington.

A day after bombings in Mombasa, Kenya, in 2002, against Israeli-linked targets, residents outside one of the city's mosques read a newspaper for details of the attack, which was claimed by Al-Qaida.

As Kenyan journalist Mutuma Mathiu summarized the common African view: "For people who have to work reasonably hard to put bread on the table, have to fight AIDS and the escalating cost of living, terrorism appears to be a distant threat. The threat of having nothing for dinner is more immediate."

New approach

Recent moves by some major powers away from a narrowly militaristic response has now created space for a new approach, noted a group of experts on terrorism convened by the United Nations. A 3–4 June meeting of the experts in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, stressed the importance of Africa's becoming more engaged in efforts to counter terrorist activities on the continent. But it also highlighted the need to "strengthen the African voice in the global discussion on terrorism," said Patrick Hayford, director of the UN's Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA), which organized the event.

The participants noted that the adoption in 2006 of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (see box, page 17) had marked a shift away from a "hard" military style in countering terrorism, towards a more nuanced approach that combines concerns over security with the pursuit of development and the promotion of human rights.

Along those lines, the experts welcomed US President Barack Obama's moves to shed the rhetoric of the previous administration. That shift, they said, fosters a global climate that is more favourable to the UN's strategy.

On 4 June — by coincidence the final day of the experts' meeting — Mr. Obama was in Cairo for his first major address to the Islamic world. Although he touched on the events of 11 September, he did not use the charged word "terrorism" — which has been interpreted by some as anti-Muslim — and repeatedly emphasized the importance of dialogue for building broad alliances to counter extremist groups.

According to Congressman Donald Payne, who heads the House of Representatives' subcommittee on Africa, broader US policy towards the continent will also shift. "This whole thing can't be the US's war on terror, whatever that was," he said. Instead, the administration will "concentrate on things that would prevent terror, like higher education."

John Brennan, the US president's top adviser on counter-terrorism, has made the same point. In an address to the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington in early August, he noted that when governments fail to ensure the well-being of their citizens, "people become more susceptible to ideologies of violence and death." Therefore, he added, the administration's approach to countering terrorism will include a "political, economic and social campaign to meet the basic needs and legitimate grievances of ordinary people."

Across porous borders

Attacks against innocent civilians by rebel groups and governments alike have long been features of armed conflicts in Africa. But it was the near-simultaneous truck bombings in August 1998 of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, which claimed the lives of hundreds of Africans and some foreigners, that brought home the continent's vulnerability to the activities of international terrorist networks, such as Al-Qaida.

The following year African leaders meeting in Algeria under the Organization of African Unity (OAU) adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. Although it lacked strong enforcement powers, it nevertheless was the first continental treaty anywhere on countering terrorism. According to Martin Ewi and Kwesi Aning, two African experts on terrorism and conflict resolution, "At a time when the international community was starkly divided on the issue, the convention united African leaders behind a common position for negotiating an international convention." Since then the OAU's successor, the African Union, has further developed Africa's continental approach.

Subsequent events demonstrated that groups using terrorist methods remain active across Africa. They have sometimes been able to move easily across poorly guarded borders.

New York Times - Michael Kamber

Malian soldiers undergoing counter-terrorism training from US forces: An effective response requires more than military action; it must also include defending human rights, combating poverty and promoting political inclusion.

A global framework against terrorism

For decades the United Nations has taken concrete steps to counter the threat of terrorism. These included the negotiation of more than a dozen international treaties and conventions against specific activities such as hijacking, hostage taking, bombing and the financing of terrorism. The Security Council has repeatedly condemned terrorist attacks and set up several subsidiary bodies, including the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime and various other UN offices and agencies also take up aspects of this effort. The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, established in 2005 to coordinate activities, now consists of 25 UN entities, as well as Interpol, the international police organization.

In September 2006 the General Assembly adopted the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. This marked a major shift in the global response: support for UN counter-terrorism efforts had broadened out from the few countries represented on the Security Council and now encompassed the entire membership. At the same time the General Assembly expanded the framework to include not only tougher law enforcement and other security measures, but also steps to address the underlying social, economic and political conditions that have favoured the spread of terrorism. While recognizing the primary responsibility of member states to protect their citizens, the strategy also highlights the role of the UN system, regional bodies (such as the African Union) and civil society groups.

The strategy rests on four "pillars":

- Addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism, including by resolving and preventing conflicts, promoting dialogue among religions and cultural groups, achieving the Millennium Development Goals, combating social exclusion and supporting good governance
- Preventing and combating terrorism
- Building the capacity of states to prevent and combat terrorism and strengthening the role of the UN system to do so
- Ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism.

"Terrorism hurts all nations — large and small, rich and poor," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told member states in 2007. "It takes its toll on human beings of every age and income, culture and religion. It strikes against everything the United Nations stands for. The fight against terrorism is our common mission."

The UN global strategy and other information on UN counter-terrorism efforts can be found at the website <www.un.org/terrorism/>

taken advantage of governments' weak control over their territories and succeeded in recruiting among disaffected populations.

Such threats are spread unevenly across the continent, says Eric Rosand, co-director of the non-governmental Centre on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation in New York, who prepared a background paper for OSAA's meeting in Addis Ababa. In recent decades some of the most persistent and deadliest attacks have taken place in North Africa, especially in Algeria, which suffered a debilitating civil war in the 1990s and spawned a number of groups, such as AQIM, that now operate beyond that country's borders as well, even sending fighters as far as Iraq.

East Africa has also seen some dramatic incidents, not only the US embassy bombings but also subsequent attacks in Mombasa, Kenya. In northern Uganda the Lord's Resistance Army, which claims fundamentalist Christian views, has systematically used terror methods by murdering, kidnapping and maiming people.

But it is Somalia, which has not had a functioning central government since 1991, that has aroused the greatest international concern over the strength of armed groups perceived as hostile to Western interests. A raid by US commandos into Somalia in September, which reportedly killed a suspected al-Qaida operative working with one of the Somali factions, showed that the new administration in Washington continues to view such forces as a threat.

West Africa has suffered relatively fewer attacks, reports Mr. Rosand, with the exception of Nigeria and the Sahelian countries of Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, where AQIM is active.

Southern Africa has so far seen little terrorist action, apart from some bombings in South Africa, some of them by right-wing domestic groups. But there is evidence that some nationals from Southern Africa have joined groups abroad, and several suspects in attacks elsewhere are known to have passed through the region.

External pressures

African governments had their own reasons to react to such threats. However, in the wake of the dramatic September 2001 attacks in the US, many governments felt pressure to adopt stringent anti-terrorism legislation and sign military agreements with the US and European countries.

Riot police in Zimbabwe: Some governments have used "anti-terrorism" laws to try to suppress dissent.

This bred some resentment. According to Mr. Rosand, there is a widespread view in Africa that the initial Western-inspired international campaign against terrorism was "developed without the input of Africans, imposed from the outside." In Nigeria, early efforts to introduce counter-terrorism laws met particularly stiff criticism in the predominantly Islamic northern states, where many viewed them as specifically targeted against Muslims.

Many African critics recall that not long ago the colonial authorities and the apartheid regime in South Africa routinely branded all their opponents as terrorists. In light of that experience, the 1999 OAU protocol against terrorism explicitly excluded struggles for liberation against colonialism, occupation and foreign domination from the definition of terrorist acts.

A number of analysts of terrorism in Africa have argued that external powers have too often disregarded such perceptions, and their actions have been seen as heavy-handed, especially in Somalia, the Sahel and other predominantly Muslim societies. While sometimes striking immediate blows against specific terrorist groups, such interventions, critics argue, have also alienated more moderate elements and even provided ammunition for terrorist recruiters.

Safeguarding human rights

In response to both domestic threats and external urging, numerous African governments have adopted laws to strengthen the ability of the police and courts to go after those who use terrorist methods. In many cases the measures were necessary to fill gaps in the legal code. Unfortunately, critics have pointed out, in some countries leaders have misused the legislation to suppress dissent or discredit political competitors.

In Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and elsewhere, argues Samuel Makinda, a Kenyan professor of security and international relations in Australia, new anti-terrorism laws are mostly technical and legal in nature, intended to tighten financial and border controls or protect communications and other infrastructure. But some laws are so broad that they have gone "far beyond constraining terrorism" and could instead "erode human rights and civil liberties."

In Zimbabwe scores of activists of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) have been arrested in recent years on terrorism charges. Members of the MDC continued to be targeted even after the party agreed to join a unity government in February 2009.

In some countries the press has been threatened. In Swaziland, where the media

reported critically on the arrests of some opposition figures on terrorism charges. Attorney General Majahenkhaba Dlamini warned journalists in late 2008: "If you appear to be supporting terrorists in your reporting, woe unto you."

Rotimi Sankore, a Nigerian rights campaigner, has noted the misuse of anti-terrorist laws in Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe and elsewhere. "Now it appears," he says, "that all any corrupt, undemocratic or insecure government needs to do to ensure the support of the West is to sign up to the anti-terror war and introduce 'anti-terrorist' legislation which is sure to be used to suppress or undermine democratic opposition and human rights."

Boubacar Gaoussou Diarra, director of the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), argues that it is vital to achieve the right balance. "How can we, as democratic societies that respect human rights, assure our collective protection and fight effectively against this form of intolerable violence?"

Regional initiatives

The ACSRT, based in Algeria's capital, Algiers, is just one initiative of African leaders to ensure that responses to terrorism conform more closely to the continent's broader aspirations for political and economic development. Opened in 2004 as an institution of the African Union (AU), and now with 42 national and seven regional focal points, the centre shares information, provides counter-terrorism training to the AU's member states and carries out detailed research to help Africans better understand the causes and features of terrorism in Africa.

Building on the OAU's earlier convention, the African Union in 2002 adopted a Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa. The plan went beyond the previous emphasis on law enforcement to also address the underlying causes of terrorist violence. It urged governments to promote policies to reduce poverty, deprivation and marginalization, which can foster discontent and be used by terrorist groups to justify violence. This aspect was later recognized in the UN's own Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Combating terrorism in Africa also requires greater coordination, both among African countries and between Africa and its international partners, argues the AU plan. In the Sahel region, neighbouring countries are starting to better coordinate activities against AQIM. The Malian army's offensive against the group, for example, benefited from intelligence provided by the Algerian authorities.

While the AU plan cites the key roles of the AU Commission and the Peace and Security Council in coordinating efforts across the continent, it also looks to the various regional economic groupings to take a lead.

"How can we, as democratic societies that respect human rights, assure our collective protection and fight effectively against this form of intolerable violence?"

– Boubacar Gaoussou Diarra, director, African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism

Among these, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has been especially energetic. IGAD, whose active members include Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda, was originally established to deal with drought and desertification, but has become increasingly active in seeking to resolve the region's various armed conflicts.

With funding from European and other donors, the group established an IGAD Capacity Building Programme Against Terrorism (ICPAT) in 2006. Overseen by the region's governments and with administrative support from South Africa's non-governmental Institute of Security Studies (ISS), the programme focuses on enhancing judicial measures and border controls, providing training and strengthening coordination on counter-terrorism among different agencies.

The programme suffers from some shortcomings, however, notes Richard Barno, a Kenyan jurist who has worked with the ICPAT. Not only is it seriously short of funding — a problem common to such coordination initiatives across Africa — but political mistrust among governments has led to a "high level of skepticism" about its efforts, Mr. Barno argues. These became so serious that Eritrea, which once belonged to IGAD, suspended its membership in 2007, and in May 2009 IGAD condemned Eritrea's support for certain factions in Somalia.

Despite such difficulties, adds Mr. Rosand, the region's governments "seem to genuinely appreciate [the ICPAT's] technically focused, results-oriented work and are deeply engaged in the programme."

Involving the public

Better coordination among African governments, intelligence services and police and military personnel — and between Africa and the UN — are vitally important, noted the experts at the OSAA meeting in Addis Ababa, and such efforts generally require more financing than they currently receive. But it is equally essential, they added, for governments and international agencies to better engage African civil society and community groups.

Too often, argues Anneli Botha, a senior researcher on terrorism at South Africa's ISS, African leaders tend to regard counter-terrorism activities as an exclusive responsibility of governments, while security forces frequently treat information about them as "top secret." As a result, she argues, governments needlessly exclude "a valuable source of information: the broad public," and make it harder to establish public trust in official efforts.

The UN's global strategy, which supports greater civil society involvement, can be used by African groups to open up counter-terrorism initiatives in Africa, argued participants at a civil society workshop in Cape Town, South Africa, in late June. Organized by the ISS and the Centre on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, the workshop reinforced many of the recommendations of the OSAA meeting earlier that month.

African civil society and community groups, argued the Cape Town workshop, can help build support for the efforts of the UN and AU, highlight the importance of protecting human rights and reach out to vulnerable and marginalized communities. "By sharing information with and seeking to engage with civil society," noted the workshop organizers, "governments are enhancing their security." ■

Private security

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The contracts, usually drawn up with a local police department, typically include substantial payments by the private firms. "It is unlikely that these informal incomes contribute to the general police budget," Mr. Goede said. "Rather the money is most likely to disappear into the private pockets of the commanders of the police departments with whom the contracts are signed."

Police officers sent to work with private firms also get "bonuses" of between $25 and $50 per month from the firm, a figure higher than most officers' salaries, which range from $20 to $40 a month. Goede observed that some companies "even pay 'their' policemen a similar salary to their own employees ... $100 to $150," and consider them "their employees, rather than state elements on loan. Such police officers ... can be replaced at the [security] company's request."

In Nigeria, Ms. Abrahamsen and Mr. Williams note, the "privatization of public policing" is most extensive in the oil sector, where insurgency and illegal oil siphoning cost the country and oil companies billions of dollars. To address the problem the Nigerian police force trains and deploys additional unarmed officers to guard corporate facilities. Such officers are paid and controlled by the companies. The researchers found that Shell employs 1,200 such officers, ExxonMobil over 700 and Chevron approximately 250. In addition, oil companies routinely rely on the heavily armed state paramilitary police (MOPOL) to secure their operations. Shell also uses over 600 armed police and MOPOL officers.

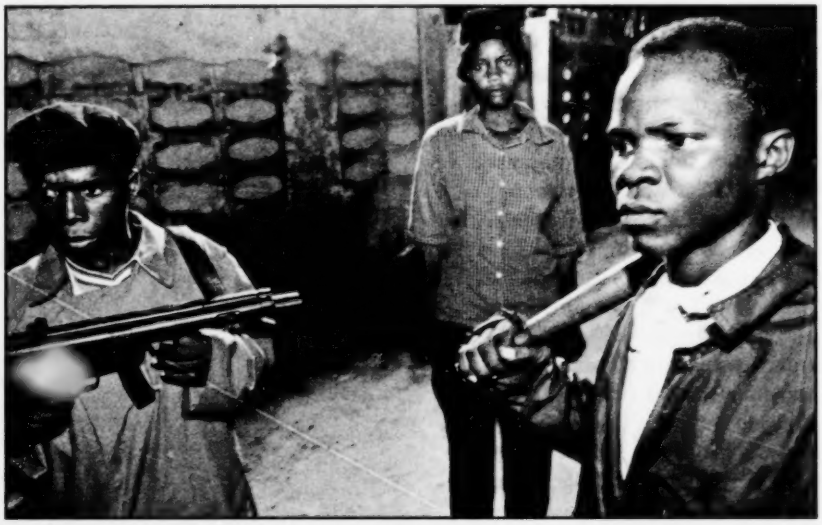
"Virtually all levels of public force, including the military, have been integrated into the day-to-day security arrangements of the oil industry to a degree where it is often difficult to determine where public policing ends and private security begins," the researchers note.

The use of public police forces to provide private security for the oil companies could be interpreted as a government effort to secure national income, since oil is the major revenue-earner for the economy. But major questions arise about the way Nigerian police forces go about playing this role.

Corruption

The arrangements, report Ms. Abrahamsen and Mr. Williams, provide opportunities for corruption. In the oil company payments for the police officers, say the researchers, "no receipts are given and prices also appear to vary somewhat between companies and contracts." Moreover, the funds generally do not go into the public coffers but instead to individual high-ranking officers and to officials assigned to work with the private security companies. They estimate that acquiring the "initial permission from the inspector general to utilize MOPOL officers" costs the equivalent of $800. Then the equivalent of $335 goes to each unit and station commander. Another $13 is allocated for each MOPOL officer per 12-hour shift, paid to the unit commander, plus a $2 supplement for food.

As such examples show, the involvement of public officials in private security dealings in Nigeria, Kenya, the DRC and other countries has become a highly profitable source of additional income for senior police commanders and officers fortunate enough to be deployed with a security firm. Such activities create wide income differences within the police force, generate cutthroat competition for the more profitable jobs and erode overall morale. There are also questions of undue political influence, since some high-ranking government and military officials in countries such as the DRC, Angola and Liberia reportedly own security firms. The irregular nature of such activities is not only "highly corrupt," Mr. Goede notes. It also "debilitates the public security forces."



Neighbourhood vigilante group in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Some communities pay local youths to protect them, but sometimes such vigilante groups engage in criminal activities themselves.

But the most dangerous result, Mr. Goede continues, is that police officers working in such a commercialized atmosphere ultimately lose the incentive to serve the public. Instead, they increasingly see security as a commodity for which the public should pay. Such an attitude, he comments, "depreciates the functioning of the police as public protector."

The very existence of security forces that individuals and companies can access only for a fee diminishes people's already low expectations of state institutions. It further reduces the legitimacy of already weak governments in the eyes of their citizens.

Out of the public domain

Many experts agree that the worst problem with such irregular, corrupt and unregulated "partnerships" between private

and public security institutions is that they remove public resources (the police, their arms and legitimacy) from the public domain, where citizens theoretically have a right to access them for free. They are deployed instead to the private arena, where they become available only for those who can afford to pay.

According to Sabelo Gumedze, a defence researcher for South Africa's ISS, official security services are virtually "nonexistent" for many poor people in Africa. This reduces their overall well-being. As the "wealthy barricade themselves behind higher security walls and install increasingly advanced alarm systems, crime moves to the poorer neighborhoods, where the 'pickings' may be less enriching, but more accessible," Mr. Gumedze explains. Inevitably, he says, the inadequately policed poor areas, especially in town centres, become the most "insecure and violent, [and] this further robs the already marginalized urban poor of a good quality of life."

Vigilantes and gangs

In a 2007 report on private security companies and human security in Africa, Mr. Gumedze and fellow ISS researcher Deane-Peter Baker pointed to another disturbing trend. As African states fail to provide protection for their citizens, the population is impelled to organize in other ways to ensure their own safety. As a result, the two researchers warn, the role of public security enforcer is increasingly being filled by "vigilante groups and other militias that have had the ability to provid[e] the services that the state is not able to provide."

For poor citizens, such non-state formations are often the cheapest and most reliable form of protection. However, over time some vigilante groups, such as the so-called Taliban and Kamjesh in Kenya or the Bakassi Boys in Nigeria, have themselves evolved into criminal organizations and extortion rings.

Security concerns are also high in countries like Uganda and Angola where private security providers are allowed to carry arms, since such weapons can be used to for criminal purposes. Mr. Kirunda of the ISS blames this on the poor monitoring and enforcement of laws prescribing safe storage of arms and prohibiting off-duty officers from carrying weapons. Moreover, the presence of former military or police officers in such heavily armed private services could potentially foster wider insecurity if the services become politicized or grow so powerful that they escape control.

Angola, Sierra Leone and the DRC have laws intended to ensure that such things do not happen. In Kenya, a proposed bill to bar members of the armed forces and the National Security Intelligence Service from running security companies and to require ex-military and police to get clearance before registering a firm has languished in parliament for years. As the UN's Mr. Ebo notes, the weakness of state institutions makes creating such laws difficult. Even where there are laws and mechanisms for enforcement, "individuals find ways to beat the law," he told *Africa Renewal*.

Without adequate security, fostering broad economic growth or achieving the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) becomes difficult. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon pointed out in a 2008 report that "longer-term development demands a sufficient degree of security to facilitate poverty reduction and economic growth."

However, police and other security sector reforms cannot be imposed on governments. As Susan van der Merwe, the South African deputy foreign minister, told the Security Council in May 2009, reforming security institutions in African countries is a "process that requires continuous attention and political will. It is a process that is politically sensitive and that must be nationally owned."

Towards that end, civil society and community organizations have a key role to play. The Centre for Law Enforcement Education (CLEEN) in Nigeria and the Mars Group in Kenya are seeking to generate public support for security reforms and pressing their governments to act. They provide the public with information about the role of the police and lobby national leaders to make the changes needed to ensure that police forces serve the population better. ■

Human trafficking

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wealthy countries."

This would require a shift in priorities, she says. "Recipient countries put their resources into combating illegal immigration. They are not really going after the traffickers," whose victims account for only a small percentage of the total number of people residing illegally in host countries. But because of the violence and intimidation against trafficked individuals, she noted, the cases "are completely different. They must train their law enforcement officers to fight trafficking and in how to identify the victims."

Speaking at UN headquarters in May, IOM Deputy Director-General Ndioro Ndiaye noted that many governments see trafficking as part of the larger — and politically sensitive — problem of illegal migration. The lines immigration officials must draw between migrants seeking to illegally cross borders and those being trafficked "can be exceptionally fine," she said. Failures to identify trafficking victims are more likely "in a climate which is generally hostile to migration." Border patrol and immigration officials in destination countries, she said, should see prevention of trafficking as a priority in addition to the enforcement of migration laws.

The "root causes" of trafficking are not just poverty and unemployment in developing countries, Ms. Ndiaye said, although anti-trafficking programmes have long focused almost exclusively on those problems. Today, she noted, there is recognition that demand for cheap labour or "exotic or unusual sex" in the destination countries is also a root cause of trafficking that must be addressed.

Ms. Ezeilo agrees, arguing that prostitution in particular remains a major incentive for the trafficking of women and girls into developed countries. In many cases, she noted, government officials and the public "are not seeing that so many of the women and girls are trafficked and forced into that trade. They are not seeing the women as the victims of exploitation and violence." Trafficking is not an issue of immigration, she argues. "It is an issue of human rights." ■

African land

from page 5

study, *"Land Grabbing" by Foreign Investors in Developing Countries: Risks and Opportunities*, governments need to develop the capacity to negotiate sound contracts and to exercise oversight. This can help create "a win-win scenario for both local communities and foreign investors."

Photo: Jane Hahn

Large pineapple farm in Ghana that exports much of its output to British markets.

The studies advise African governments to be strategic in their approach. In his report, Mr. De Schutter puts forward a number of recommendations to guide such land deals. These include:

- the free, prior and full participation and agreement of all local communities concerned — not just their leaders
- protection of the environment, based on thorough impact assessments that demonstrate a project's sustainability
- full transparency, with clear and enforceable obligations for investors, backed by specified sanctions and legislation, as necessary, and
- measures to protect human rights, labour rights, land rights and the right to food and development.

Such comprehensive deals would be in the long-term interest of investors and local communities alike, IFPRI notes, pointing out that land disputes can become violent, and governments may quickly find themselves with no alternative but to change or rescind contractual arrangements.

Land rights

Land ownership is a core issue. Only a relatively small portion of land in Africa is subject to individual titling. Much land is community-owned, and in some countries state-owned. Even land that is officially categorized as un- or underutilized may in fact be subject to complex patterns of "customary" usage. "Better systems to recognize land rights are urgently needed," the FAO argues in a recent policy brief, *From Land Grab to Win-Win*.

The World Bank points to the importance of international bodies helping African governments develop land registry systems. The IIED study stresses that such schemes must allow for collective registration of community lands that protect "customary" land rights.

Mr. De Schutter argues that internationally agreed-upon human rights instruments can be used to protect such rights, including those of livestock herders and indigenous forest dwellers.

According to the IIED study, the bulk of recent large-scale land acquisitions in Africa have been based on the leasing of land to foreign entities with the intent of using labour to work the land. The study argues the need for governments to include clauses ensuring the use of local labour in contracts for such schemes. In Mozambique, local opposition to a Chinese project to develop 100,000 hectares was based on plans to import Chinese labour.

Success or failure

"Agreements to lease or cede large areas of land in no circumstance should be allowed to trump the human rights obligations of the states concerned," Mr. De Schutter argues. That goes for both the states receiving the investment and those from which the investments originate.

Proposals for such ideal agreements, backed by necessary national legislation and enforcement principles, are being put forward. But, as the IIED study points out, there is already a large gulf between contractual provisions and their enforcement. The gap between the statute books and the reality on the ground may entail serious costs for local communities.

A code of conduct for host governments and foreign investors could help ensure that land deals are a "win-win" arrangement for investor and local communities alike, IFPRI suggests. It cites the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, which binds participating governments and companies to certain standards in mining and oil activities, as one possible model for large-scale land deals.

Mr. De Schutter is sceptical that such a code can be negotiated or enforced. He instead emphasizes the existing body of human rights laws, which can be applied to large-scale land acquisitions and used to get governments to meet their obligations to citizens.

Either way, experts agree that African governments must have the will and the ability to apply laws. "Strengthening the negotiation capacity is vital," Mr. De Schutter argues. And that capacity cannot be of governments alone, he says. Local communities must also be empowered and national parliaments must be involved. Achieving that, many fear, may be the most difficult gap to bridge. ■

AFRICA AGENDA

2–6 November 2009, Nairobi (Kenya) — Fifth MIM Pan-African Malaria Conference. A forum for the malaria research community and stakeholders to review recent research, identify priorities and discuss translating research results into policy and practice. Organized by the Multilateral Initiative on Malaria (MIM) and the Kenya Medical Research Institute. Website <www.mimalaria.org/pamc>

2–6 November 2009, Cape Town (South Africa) — 16th Africa Oil Week. An event marking Africa's oil exploration success and new venture opportunities. Contact Babette van Gessel, tel + 31 70 324 6154, e-mail <babette@glopac.com>, website <www.petro21.com>

7–8 November 2009, Doha (Qatar) — Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity. Sponsored by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Transparency International and several national governments. To be followed by the third session of the Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption 9–13 November. Website <www.unodc.org>

8–9 November 2009, Sharm El Sheik (Egypt) — Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation. Co-chaired by Egypt and the People's Republic of China. Tel +86 10 65 96 11 14, e-mail <zhongfei_luntan@mfa.gov.cn>, website <www.fmprc.gov.cn/zflt/eng/>

10–11 November 2009, Accra (Ghana) — Fifth Annual International Conference of the African Science Academy Development Initiative. Focusing on improving maternal, newborn and child health, the conference will be hosted by the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences. Contact S.K. Danso, e-mail <council@gaas-gh.org>, Francis Ankrah <office@gaas-gh.org>, US National Academies <Africa@nas.edu>, website <www.nationalacademies.org/asadi/index.html>

11–13 November 2009, Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) — Fourth African Economic Conference. Jointly organized by the African Development Bank and the Economic Commission for Africa. E-mail <aec@afdb.org>, website <www.afdb.org>

16–18 November 2009, Rome (Italy) — FAO World Summit on Food Security. Tel +39 06 570 53101, fax +39 06 570 56172, e-mail <wsfs2009-secretariat@fao.org>, website <www.fao.org>

25–26 November 2009, Midrand(South Africa) — NEPAD Transport Summit and Africa Transport Trade and Investment Expo (ATTIEX). Will bring together experts and leaders to discuss how to integrate national action plans on transport and increase awareness of transport's potential for trade, regional funding and foreign investment. Contact Tanitha, tel +27 (0)21 681 7000, e-mail <tanitha@capemedia.co.za>, website <www.nepadtransportsummit.org>

7–18 December 2009, Copenhagen (Denmark) — United Nations Climate Change Conference. Tel +45 33 92 33 00, fax + 45 33 92 33 00, website <www.cop15.dk/>

14–15 January 2010, Toulouse (France) — International Conference on Infrastructure Economics and Development. Organized by the Institut d'Économie Industrielle and the World Bank, among others. Contact Jean-Jacques Dethier, e-mail <jdethier@worldbank.org> or Stéphane Straub <stephane.straub@univ-tlse1.fr>, website <www.ajef.net/grepinternationalconference>

WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE

9–11 October 2009, Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) — Seventh World Forum of Sustainable Development. Website <www.fmdd.fr>

12–13 October 2009, Rome (Italy) — FAO High-Level Experts Forum on How to Feed the World in 2050. Tel +39 06 570 53354, fax +39 06 570 56172, e-mail <HLC-2050@fao.org>, website <www.fao.org/wsfs/forum2050/wsfs-forum/en/>

18–23 October 2009, Buenos Aires (Argentina) — Thirteenth World Forestry Congress. Contact Florencia Reca, e-mail <freca@cfm2009.org>, website <www.cfm2009.org>

AFRICA BOOKS

Peace versus Justice? The Dilemma of Transitional Justice in Africa, eds. Chandra Lekha Sriram and Suren Pillay (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, Cape Town, South Africa, 2009; 400 pp; pb R245)

After Genocide: Transitional Justice, Post-conflict Reconstruction and Reconciliation in Rwanda and Beyond, eds. Phil Clark and Zachary D. Kaufman (C. Hurst and Co, London, UK, 2009; 352 pp; pb £20, $50)

Vers la deuxième indépendance du Congo by Colette Braeckman (Le Cri, Brussels, Belgium, 2009; 267 pp; pb €19)

Africa's Human Rights Architecture, eds. John Akokpari and Daniel Shea Zimbler (Jacana Media, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2008; 320 pp; pb R145)

From Global Apartheid to Global Village: Africa and the United Nations, ed. Adekeye Adebajo (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, Cape Town, South Africa, 2009; 664 pp; hb £42.95)

Aid to Africa: Redeemer or Colonizer? eds. Hakima Abbas and Yves Niyiragira (Pambazuka Press, London, UK, 2009; pb £12.95)

An Inconvenient Responsibility by René Lefeber (Eleven International Publishers, Utrecht, Netherlands, 2009; 28 pp; pb €12.50, $20)

Du pétrole à la solidarité: Un itinéraire africain by Bernard Moulenes (L'Harmattan, Paris, France, 2009; 146 pp; pb €14, FF92)

China Safari: On the Trail of Beijing's Expansion in Africa by Serge Michel and Michel Beuret (Nation Books, New York, US, 2009; 336 pp; hb $27.50)

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon? Africa and China, eds. Kweku Ampiah and Sanusha Naidu (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, Cape Town, South Africa, 2008; 480 pp; pb R220)

La crise financière internationale de 2008 et ses conséquences en RDCongo by Ntanda Nkingi Nkere (L'Harmattan, Paris, France, 2009; 136 pp; €13.50, FF89)

L'Africanisme solidaire: sur les quais de l'espérance by Mohamed Salem Merzoug (L'Harmattan, Paris, France, 2008; 248 pp; €23, FF151)

The Democratic Moment: South Africa's Prospects under Jacob Zuma by Xolela Mangcu (Jacana Media, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2009; 224 pp; pb R180)

Zunami! The 2009 South African Election by Roger Southall and John Daniel (Jacana Media, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2009; 288 pp; pb R180)

L'Afrique pour rire by Venance Konan (Jean Picollec, Paris, France, 2009; 118 pp; pb €12)

Fixing Fragile States: A New Paradigm for Development by Seth Kaplan (Praeger Security International, Santa Barbara, CA, USA, 2008; 232 pp; hb $65)

Droit, culture et minorités, eds. Arnaud De Raulin, Sidi Mohamed Ould Abdallahi and Gourmo Lo (L'Harmattan, Paris, France, 2009; 390 pp; €34.50, FF226)

Identity, Diversity and Constitutionalism in Africa by Francis M. Deng (US Institute of Peace Press, Herndon, VA, USA, 2008; 308 pp; pb $19.95, hb $50)

Liberia and the United States during the Cold War: Limits of Reciprocity by D. Elwood Dunn (Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire, UK, 2009; 288 pp; pb $84.95)

Food Rebellions! Crisis and the Hunger for Justice by Eric Holt-Giménez and Raj Patel (Fahamu Books, Oxford, UK, 2009; 260 pp; pb £16.95)

An Economic History of Ghana: Reflections on a Half-Century of Challenges and Progress, ed. Ivor Agyeman-Duah (Lynne Rienner, Boulder, CO, USA, 2008; 280 pp; hb $55)

Africa and the World Trade Organization by Richard E. Mshomba (Cambridge University Press, West Nyack, NY, USA, 2009; 382 pp; hb $80)

The New Economics: A Bigger Picture by David Boyle and Andrew Simms (Stylus Publishing, Virginia, USA, 2009; 160 pp; hb $24.95)

Corporate Responses to Climate Change: Achieving Emissions Reductions Through Regulation, Self-Regulation and Economic Incentives, ed. Rory Sullivan (Greenleaf, Sheffield, UK, 2008; 356 pp; hb £40, €60, $75)

AFRICA WATCH

GROUP OF 20

Africa gets seat at policy table

In a move that underscores the shift of global economic power, the Group of Eight (G-8) club of major industrialized economies — the US, UK, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Canada and Russia — was officially replaced as the world's top financial forum in late September. The change was announced at the 24–25 September summit of the new Group of (G-20) in the US city of Pittsburgh. First created in late 2008 in the midst of the global economic crisis, the new group includes the members of the G-8, as well as China, Brazil, South Africa and other developing countries.

For Africa, the Pittsburgh summit "comes at a pivotal stage in dealing with the financial crisis," said African Development Bank President Donald Kaberuka. African economies have been hit hard by the downturn, he noted at the summit, and "it could take years for financing flows to Africa to resume." Meeting the needs of poorer African countries will be an early test of the G-20's leadership, he concluded. "If it does so it will enhance its legitimacy in global governance. Failure to do so will call it into question." ■

SOUTH-SOUTH

Banking on South America

African and South American leaders initialled a number of new economic cooperation agreements at the second Africa-South America Summit. Held in Isla Margarita, Venezuela, the 26-27 September gathering drew heads of state and senior government officials from 54 African and 12 South American countries to expand cooperation in eight sectors, including agriculture, mining and energy, education and culture, and peace and security.

The leaders also announced creation of a $20 bn Bank of the South to underwrite increased African-South American commerce and investment, with financing primarily from Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela. In a statement that analysts said captured the summit's assertive tone of the, Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa declared that "we're done depending on the North. On one side kneeling down to ask for some dollars and on the other sending billions of dollars to them. We've had enough of that contradiction."

The meeting came three years after the first Africa-South America summit in Abuja, Nigeria. The gatherings reflect a dramatic growth in ties between the two continents. Brazil's trade with Africa, mostly in farm products and manufactured goods, increased from $5 bn in 2002 to almost $26 bn six years later. Brazil is also an important investor, committing some $4 bn to African agriculture since 2003 and training African farmers in biofuel production. Argentina sold $3 bn worth of soybeans, dairy products and grain to Africa last year, making it Africa's second largest Latin American trading partner. ■

HIV/AIDS

Vaccine results promising

In September researchers announced that an experimental vaccine succeeded in protecting about one in three test subjects from contracting the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) that causes AIDS. It is the first time that scientists have succeeded in developing a vaccine that prevents HIV from infecting humans. But it is not yet known why the serum left so many people unprotected or even why it worked in the first place. Scientists at the US National Institutes of Health, which is among the vaccine's sponsors, say it will be years, if ever, before the vaccine is safe and effective enough to be used widely.

The development of a vaccine with even limited effectiveness would be very good news for sub-Saharan Africa. The region accounted for 67 per cent of the 33 million people living with HIV infections globally and three of every four AIDS deaths in 2007. ■

APPOINTMENTS

UN / Paulo Figueiras

The UN General Assembly has elected Mr. **Ali Abdussalam Treki** of Libya as the new president of its 64th Session. Mr. Treki, who assumed the office on 23 September, was his country's minister of African Union affairs at the time of his election. Having served three times as Libyan ambassador to the UN, Mr. Treki brings a deep knowledge of the UN. He has also played a key role in the African Union and as a mediator in several conflicts in Africa, notably in Sudan, Chad and between Ethiopia and Eritrea, among others.

UN / Mark Garten

Ms. **Judy Cheng-Hopkins** of Malaysia, the former assistant high commissioner for refugees, has been appointed by the UN Secretary-General as the new assistant secretary-general and head of the Peacebuilding Support Office, which was created in 2006 to support the newly-established Peacebuilding Commission. She has over 30 years of experience in several UN organizations, working on humanitarian, post-conflict, peacebuilding and development issues. Ms. Cheng-Hopkins replaces Ms. Jane Holl Lute.

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has elected Ms. **Irina Bokova** of Bulgaria as its new director-general. Ms. Bokova, the first woman in UNESCO's top position, has held various posts within her country's diplomatic service since October 1991, including as foreign minister and most recently as ambassador to France. She will replace Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura of Japan.

Society for International Development

The UN Human Rights Council has appointed Ms. **Rashida Manjoo**, a South African lawyer, as the new UN special rapporteur on violence against women, for a term that lasts until June 2012. Previously, Ms. Manjoo taught and conducted research at several universities in the US and South Africa. Like other rapporteurs who report to the Human Rights Council, she will serve in an unpaid and independent capacity. She succeeds Ms. Yakin Ertürk of Turkey.